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IRAN-IRAQ SITUATION REPORT, 5 MARCH 1984
IRANIAN ACTIVITY AROUND AL BASRAH

3. THE ACTIVITY NEAR THE MARSHES AND EAST OF AL BASRAH SUGGESTS THE MAJOR IRANIAN OFFENSIVE AGAINST AL BASRAH WILL INVOLVE AT LEAST TWO MAJOR THRUSTS. THE MAIN ATTACKS COULD COME AS EARLY AS THE END OF THIS WEEK WHEN THE IRANIANS PROBABLY WILL FINISH REDEPLOYING THEIR REGULAR ARMY UNITS TO THE SOUTH FROM NORTHERN AREAS.

4. A LARGE ASSAULT MAY BE LAUNCHED AGAINST THE IRAQI DEFENSES EAST OR NORTHEAST OF AL BASRAH TO PIN DOWN OR DRAW IRAQI REINFORCEMENTS TO THE AREAS. A SECOND MAJOR ATTACK WILL BE LAUNCHED SOUTH ACROSS THE MARSHES -- AROUND THE FLANK OF

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[REDACTED]

EXISTING IRAQI FORTIFICATIONS -- SEIZING QURNA AND THE STRATEGIC BRIDGES ACROSS THE TIGRIS RIVER. IRANIAN LONG-RANGE ARTILLERY ON THE PENINSULA ALSO MIGHT SHELL THE BAGHDAD TO AL BASRAH ROAD NORTH OF QURNA. IRANIAN COMMANDERS PROBABLY HOPE THAT IRAQI UNITS CAUGHT BETWEEN THE TWO THRUSTS WOULD PANIC AND FLEE TO THE WEST, LEAVING AL BASRAH VULNERABLE. [REDACTED]

CASUALTIES

5. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] WE ESTIMATE OVERALL IRANIAN CASUALTIES ARE AT LEAST 10,000. IN A SPEECH THIS WEEKEND, THE AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI ANSWERED APPARENT INTERNAL CRITICISM OF THE HIGH HUMAN COST OF THE LATEST IRANIAN OFFENSIVE. HE DENIED IRAN HAD SUFFERED HEAVY LOSSES AND CLAIMED THAT IRANIAN FORCES HAVE MADE CONSIDERABLE GAINS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO. HE IMPLIED THAT CRITICS QUESTIONING THE REASON FOR PURSUING THE WAR INTO IRAQ WERE MOTIVATED BY NARROW IRANIAN NATIONALISM WHEN THE CONFLICT WAS ACTUALLY INTENDED TO SPREAD ISLAM THROUGHOUT THE REGION. [REDACTED]

MORE IRAQI THREATS TO PERSIAN GULF SHIPPING

6. STATEMENTS BY IRAQI OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE COMMANDER OF THE NAVY, AGAIN WARNED THAT SHIPPING IN THE PERSIAN GULF COULD BE ATTACKED AS PART OF THE IRAQI ECONOMIC SIEGE OF IRAN. ONE OFFICIAL NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT IRAQ WOULD REFRAIN FROM ATTACKING KHARK ISLAND IF IRAN ALLOWS IRAQ TO BEGIN EXPORTING OIL THROUGH THE GULF. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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